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Subject: IACP"s The Lead: Search Continues For Suspect In Austin Package Bombings
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Greetings Vicki Hennessy

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

POLICING & POLICY

Search Continues For Suspect In Austin Package Bombings.

USA Today (3/13, Pegoraro, Gomez) reports, "Nervous residents of Austin called police more than 265 times by Tuesday evening to report suspicious packages near their homes following a series of package explosions that left two people dead and two others seriously injured." Austin Police Chief Brian Manley "encouraged residents to call 911 if they found any packages on their doorsteps that they weren't expecting or did not include normal markings." USA Today says a "multi-agency investigation to find the serial bomber" has developed. The FBI "dispatched behavioral profilers, evidence collection teams and bomb technicians." The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives "sent 30 specialists, including analysts and explosives specialists." USA Today explains that the investigation "has grown to over 100 law enforcement officials." KTBC-TV Austin, TX (3/13) reports that the neighbor of one of the victims "provided surveillance video to the FBI, hoping it will help lead them to the suspect."

The AP (3/13, Weissert, Weber) reports, "Families of two people killed by package bombs left on their doorsteps in Austin knew each other and were connected through local activism in the black community, a civic leader said Tuesday. But it was not clear how they might be tied to a third household where a package bomb also exploded." Chief Manley is quoted as saying, "We're not saying that we believe terrorism or hate is in play, but we absolutely have to consider that because we don't want to limit what we are investigating, what we are considering and how we are approaching this case."

The Dallas Morning News (3/13, Wang, Bureau) reports Austin police are "offering a $50,000 reward for information leading to an arrest" for the bombings, while Gov. Greg Abbott "offered $15,000 on Monday for any information leading to an arrest in the case, bringing total available rewards to $65,000."

Bombs Historically Produce "Wealth" Of Evidence. The Austin (TX) American Statesman (3/13, Lindell) reports "bombings produce a wealth of physical evidence," which is "part of the reason that cases resulting in death or injury have almost always, in recent years, led to a suspect being arrested. The recovered material is checked against the ATF's Arson and Explosives National Repository and the FBI's Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center." The Statesman adds that "explosives experts not working on the case described a fast-moving but detail-oriented approach" to solving such cases.

San Diego Police Create New Homelessness Division.

The San Diego Union-Tribune (3/13) reports the San Diego Police Department is creating a new division that "will focus on helping homeless people get services and mental health treatment while also cracking down on those disrupting the quality of life of residents and businesses in certain neighborhoods." Capt. Scott Wahl, who will run the unit, "said the division will focus on neighborhood quality-of-life issues including graffiti, crime and homelessness." He added, "It's about being proactive on crime-prevention techniques and strategies. ... We're going to have teams that will be proactive in addressing community concerns and issues."

South Carolina Debating Proposal To Increase Penalty For School Threats.

Columbia (SC) State (3/13) reports the South Carolina state Senate will "debate a proposal to toughen the penalty for threatening a school or student." The proposed legislation "would stiffen the penalties for anyone who threatens to harm or cause damage, injury or death to a student or at a school with a 'firearm or dangerous weapon.'"

US Bureau Of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms And Explosives Revisit Bump Stock Rules.

The New York Times (3/13, Watkins) reports that after the deadly school shooting in Parkland, Florida, US President Donald Trump "announced a string of changes, including a ban of so-called bump stock devices." The Justice Department, Trump said it "was reviewing the issue and would soon move to take the devices off shelves. But at the time, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives...had reached no such conclusion." The Justice Department and ATF have since "aligned themselves with the president," and "announc[ed] on Saturday that the agency can ban bump stocks under current law."

Illinois Governor Vetoes Measure Requiring State To License Gun Dealers. The Chicago Tribune (3/13, Garcia) reports that Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner on Tuesday "vetoed a bill that would have required the state to license and regulate gun shops, drawing sharp criticism from Democrats." Rauner "called the proposal 'duplicative' because the federal government already licenses firearms retailers. He said adding another layer of oversight would be costly for businesses and 'do little to improve public safety.'"

Appeals Court Overturns Injunction Blocking Texas Anti-Sanctuary Law.

Politico (3/13, Gerstein) reports that the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals on Tuesday "formally overturned nearly all of an injunction that a U.S. District Court judge issued last year against a Texas immigration law aimed at blocking local governments in the state from adopting so-called sanctuary policies." Politico says the ruling "was not a surprise, because that court issued a stay last September allowing the bulk of the Texas law...to take effect."

The Dallas Morning News (3/13, Barragán) reports that "with the exception of a statute that would punish local officials for endorsing policies that limit federal immigration enforcement," the court "allowed the rest of the law to stand." The court "blocked that section of the law because it deemed the word 'endorse' to be too broad and risked subjecting local officials to punishment for speaking out against the law, a violation of the First Amendment guarantee to free speech." According to the News, "officials who act on limiting federal immigration enforcement, however, are still subject to punishment. 'With one exception, SB 4's provisions do not, on their face, violate the Constitution,' the court's opinion reads." The New York Times (3/13, Astor) reports the appeals panel "rejected one element of the law: a clause that prohibits local officials from 'endorsing' policies that limit immigration enforcement." Officials "can be forbidden to enact or enforce such policies, the panel ruled, but a ban on endorsements violates the First Amendment." ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt "said they were considering whether to appeal and would probably make a decision this week." Gelernt also "said his organization would also be monitoring how the law was carried out."

Ontario Police To Conduct Distracted Driving Operation.

CBC (CAN) (3/13) reports Ontario Provincial Police are "conducting a blitz this week to raise awareness of the dangers of distracted driving." in 2017, the OPP "investigated 83 motor vehicle deaths in which driver inattention was an underlying factor." Sergeant Carlo Berardi "says until drivers get the message, the police will continue to conduct blitzes like this."

COMMUNITY

More Residents Interested In Crime-Watching In Rural Alberta.

CBC (CAN) (3/13) reports, "Grassroots rural crime-watching organizations are hearing from more people interested in starting patrol teams in Alberta." Volunteers "patrol their neighbourhoods and watch for crimes in progress." They also "jot down licence plates of suspicious vehicles, for example, or call 911." CBC explains that the goal of the crime-watchers is to "fill any gaps left by police who patrol large swaths of rural land." Alberta recently announced $10 million in extra funds to "deal with rural crime," as police have "said rural crime jumped 41 per cent between 2013 and 2017." The new funds are "earmarked to hire more police officers, more Crown prosecutors and to add organized crime specialists to investigative teams."

Women's Leadership Institute Opportunities

Prepare the leaders of tomorrow. IACP's Women's Leadership Institute is open for registration in Nashville, Tennessee; Ottawa, Ontario; and Chandler, Arizona. Sessions are filling up quickly, so register today.

Register now.

CRIME & DRUGS

Prosecutors To Seek Death Penalty For Parkland Shooting Suspect.

The Washington Post (3/13, Berman) reports, "Prosecutors in Broward County, Fla., said Tuesday they would seek a death sentence for Nikolas Cruz, the 19-year-old charged with the shooting rampage at a Parkland high school last month." The prosecutors' announcement "came nearly a week after Cruz was indicted by a grand jury on 34 counts of premeditated murder and attempted murder for the Feb. 14 massacre, which killed 17 people and injured the same number." Attorneys for Cruz "do not contest his guilt, and they have offered to have him plead guilty if prosecutors did not seek the death penalty and instead agreed to a life sentence in prison."

More Nations Returning Looted Artifacts.

The Christian Science Monitor (3/13, Haq) reports, "After centuries of cultural theft, the pendulum may be swinging toward repatriation." The Monitor says the trend has "accelerated over the past decade, thanks to increased awareness of past cultural injustices and renewed respect for national sovereignty, some experts say." Since 2007, the US has "returned more than 8,000 stolen artifacts to 30 countries, including paintings from Poland, manuscripts from Peru, and dinosaur fossils from Mongolia, according to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement."

TECHNOLOGY

US Homeland Security Using Facial Recognition Tech To Rescue Child Exploitation Victims.

FedScoop (3/13, Chappellet) reports the US Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate is "developing and testing facial recognition algorithms to help scour through images of child exploitation found on the internet and the dark web." The project, called Child Exploitation Image Analytics (CHEXIA), "aims to aid investigators in dealing with the huge amounts of graphic and violent images of child abuse that they collect." Automatic facial recognition technology "can help these investigators locate both the victims and the perpetrators more quickly, officials say." Program Manager Patricia Wolfhope explained that the "number of reports received through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) cyber tip line has grown steadily each year, from 223,374 to 326,310 to 415,650 in 2010, 2011, and 2012, respectively," and NCMEC's "analysis indicates the number of images being collected and traded by offenders worldwide continues to expand exponentially." As a result, S&T partnered with the Child Exploitation Investigations Unit at Homeland Security Investigations' Cyber Crimes Center (C3) "to explore how technology can help."

Delaware To Test Digital Driver's Licenses.

The AP (3/13) reports the Delaware Department of Transportation "announced Tuesday that the state's Division of Motor Vehicles has launched a six-month pilot of the digital license." The AP says Virginia and Iowa have tested similar programs, but "no state has yet permanently implemented the digital licenses."

IACP IN THE NEWS

IACP Asia-Pacific Regional Conference To Focus On Cyber Crime.

The Business Standard (IND) (3/13) reports, "Growing interest of terrorist groups and radical elements in exploiting the cyberspace and its advanced technologies for their various heinous crimes and nefarious designs and how to deal with them will be discussed at a two-day international conference beginning...tomorrow." India's Home Minister Rajnath Singh "will inaugurate the two-day Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) which will discuss and find ways on 'Challenges to Policing in 2020- How is Cyber Space shaping our approach to Cybercrime & Terrorism, how do we perform within it and take advantage of it.'"

US Attorney General To Visit Kentucky, Tennessee On Thursday.

The Lexington (KY) Herald-Leader (3/13, Estep) reports that Attorney General Sessions "plans to meet families of overdose victims Thursday in Lexington and speak about the nation's epidemic of addiction to painkillers called opioids." Sessions "is to speak at the office of U.S. Attorney Robert M. Duncan Jr." The Herald-Leader notes that Kentucky "has among the highest levels of abuse of opioids in the nation."

The Tennessean (3/13, Tamburin) reports that Attorney General Sessions will also "visit Nashville Thursday to speak with police chiefs from across the world." Sessions will "deliver the opening keynote address at a conference for the International Association of Chiefs of Police."

TUESDAY'S LEAD STORIES

- **Law Enforcement Investigating String Of Bomb Attacks In Austin.**
- **Nevada Meth-Related Deaths Increasing.**
- **Central Florida Officers Approve Passage Of Bill Extending PTSD Benefits.**

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